BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

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Issue: 99-26 4 Pages
July 2, 1999

highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Migration

- **During the first quarter of 1999, BC gained 1,782 people as a result of net migration from all sources.** This was less than half the increase (3,999) in the first quarter of 1998. The province continued to draw immigrants from other countries (with a net inflow of 6,577 in the first quarter of this year), but has been losing people to other parts of Canada since the beginning of last year.

  There was a net outflow of 4,795 people from BC to the rest of Canada in the first quarter. The province lost people to all regions of the country except the territories, with Alberta (3,501) making the biggest gain. Ontario was the next-biggest beneficiary of migration from BC, with a net gain of 910 people. BC has been losing people to Alberta since mid-1996, but the exodus has been slowing. The first quarter loss to Alberta was almost 25% lower than a year earlier.

  Net international migration to British Columbia fell to 13% below first-quarter 1998 levels. The decline in BC has been greater than in the rest of the country, and as a result, BC's share of immigration to the country slipped to 20.5%.

  Source: BC STATS

Public Sector Employment

- **During the first quarter of 1999, one in five (352,000) British Columbians with jobs worked in the public sector.** Health, social service and educational institutions were the largest employers, with 210,600 people on their payrolls. Another 109,100 BC residents worked for federal, provincial and local government ministries and agencies, while 32,300 were employed by crown corporations.

  There were 1,500 (-0.4%) fewer public sector employees in the first quarter of this year than in the same period of 1998. Employment was down in most parts of the public sector, the only exceptions being crown corporations (+2.1%), health and social service institutions (+1.1%, to 83,700), and school boards, where the number of employees was virtually unchanged from a year earlier (+0.1%, to 82,600). The largest decline was in local general government, where the number of workers dropped 4.9%, to 34,400. Nationwide, public sector employment shrank 0.6% to 2.8 million, as most regions cut back on the number of public sector jobs.

  Source: Statistics Canada

- **BC's public sector employment rate (employees per 1,000 population) dropped to 87.5 in the first quarter, down from 88.5 a year earlier.** There were modest decreases in the employment rate for most components of the public sector. Local general government, where the employment rate fell from 9.0 in the first quarter of last year to 8.5 this year, posted the largest decline. *Source: Statistics Canada & BC STATS*

- **BC's employment rate was below the national average (92.6) and lower than in every other region except Alberta (87.0) and Ontario (82.9).** There are no signs that the steady downward trend in public sector employment is likely to end. During the last year, Ontario's public sector employment rate shrank 2.6 points, while Alberta's decreased 2.3 points. Nationally, the rate fell 1.4 points.

  Source: Statistics Canada & BC STATS

The Economy

- **The average worker in BC earned $626 per week (seasonally adjusted) in April, marginally (+0.1%) more than in the previous month.** Weekly earnings in other provinces ranged from $481 in PEI to $647 in Ontario. Workers in the

Report 1999 Index

Did you know...

The average Canadian consumed 4.5 kg of coffee last year. That's the equivalent of about 450 cups per person. Soft drink consumption averaged 114 litres per person–also about 450 cups a year.

north, who are paid premium wages, received $676 weekly if they lived in Yukon, and $730 if they were located in NWT/Nunavut. The Canadian average was $607. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Attendance at Sports Events

- **Going to sporting events–at least some of them–is becoming less popular among British Columbians.** In 1986, one in four BC households bought tickets to live sports spectacles. By 1996, the share had dropped to just over one in five. Football teams, in particular, have fallen on hard times. The percentage of BC households buying football tickets went from 8% to 4% during the ten-year period ending in 1996. Hockey, however, appears to have staged a comeback (with attendance increasing from 10% to 13%), while baseball clubs have held their own at just over 4%. Nine percent of BC households bought tickets to other sporting events in 1996, down from 11% ten years earlier.
  Source: Statistics Canada & BC STATS

- **Nationally, the percentage of households buying tickets to live sports events fell from 27% to 22% between 1986 and 1996.** Total spending on these events shrank almost 4% to $401 million, an average of $37 per household. Possible reasons for the lower attendance include higher ticket prices, the departure of some NHL teams to new locations south of the border, and the demise of a CFL franchise. Baseball is also proving to be less of a draw than it once was, possibly due to fan disillusionment in the wake of a players strike in 1994, and the weaker performance of Canada's two major league clubs. *Source: SC, Catalogue 11-010-XPB*

- **BC households spent $57 million–an average of $40 each–on live sports spectacles in 1996, up from $26 per family a decade earlier.** Half ($20 per household, compared to $8 in 1986) of the spending was on hockey games, with an additional $5 spent on tickets to football games, $2 on baseball, and $13 on various other sporting events. Average household spending on tickets to events other than hockey, football and baseball almost doubled during the ten years ending in 1996. This is undoubtedly related to the opening of GM Place, which has provided a venue for sporting spectacles such as WWF wrestling, and the advent of the Vancouver Grizzlies of the NBA. *Source: Statistics Canada & BC STATS*

Young Offenders

- **In 1997/98, about 33,000 young offenders in Canada (excluding BC, for which complete data were not available) were dealt with through non-judicial community-based alternatives, rather than the usual court system.** This type of approach was particularly favoured in Alberta, where the participation rate was two-and-a-half times the national average. Alternative measures frequently (22%) involved some sort of community service. In 18% of cases, the young offenders were required to apologize, either personally or in writing, to their victim.
  Source: SC, The Daily

The Nation

- **Labour productivity (real GDP per hour worked) in the business sector increased 0.7% in 1998, after growing 2.9% in the previous year.** Economic growth was slower in 1998 than in 1997 (+3.4%, compared to +5.4%), but the number of hours worked increased at a fairly steady pace (+2.7%, up slightly from +2.5% in 1997). The service sector, where labour productivity rose 1.5% last year, helped offset a 0.1% decline in the goods-producing industries.
  Source: SC, The Daily

- **Canada's economy grew 0.3% (seasonally adjusted) in April, marking the ninth straight month in which the economy has expanded.** Both the goods (+0.2%) and service (+0.3%) industries provided the impetus for growth, as output expanded in all but three of the major industry groups. Retail trade (-1.0%) was the only industry to suffer a setback in April, but both the mining and manufacturing sectors stalled, with real GDP remaining unchanged from March. For the third straight month, wholesale trade (+1.2%) outperformed most other sectors of the economy. *Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

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1999 Index (the first six months)

Jan 8 ... Post-secondary education participation trends by type
Jan 15 . BC women posted a strong labour market performance in 1998
Jan 22 . Offsetting export losses in Asia with gains in U.S. market
Jan 29 . The long and the short of working hours for the self-employed

Feb 5 ... British Columbia part-time employment highest in Canada
Feb 12 . BC men – their participation in the labour market continues to decline
Feb 19 . Tourism Room Revenue • September 1998
Feb 26 . Direct tourism employment

Mar 5 ... Changes to labour force survey data for industry, occupation and class of worker
Mar 12 . Diversification of export mix accelerates in 1998
Mar 19 . Researching your business
Mar 26 . Youth in BC – their job prospects are beginning to improve

Apr 1 .... BC's agriculture industry – from dairy farming to ginseng
Apr 9 .... Changes in B.C. employment by industry, occupation and class of worker
Apr 16 .. Look us over . . . www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca
Apr 23 .. Are the non-metropolitan regions of BC becoming more economically diversified?
Apr 30 .. British Columbia export reliance on US market highest since early 1960s

May 7 ... Immigrants to BC from China-mainland
May 14 . BC migration – outlook for 1999
May 21 . Minimum wage earners in BC
May 28 . Measuring employment in the public sector

Jun 4 .... British Columbia losing ground in U.S. lumber market
Jun 11 .. BC youth and the minimum wage
Jun 18 .. Co-operative movement grows through the 1990s
Jun 25 .. Tourism Industry Monitor • Annual 1998

Jul 2 ..... 1999 Index (the first six months)

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/99	% change on one year ago
BC	4,028.3	0.7
Canada	30,482.9	0.9
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1997	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	109,347	3.3
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	98,201	2.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	24,775	0.1
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	16,340	-2.3
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Apr	2,961	8.5
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	2,345	11.5
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Apr	2,788	-0.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	May '99	one year ago
BC	111.1	0.7
Canada	110.4	1.6
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	May '99	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,062	0.7
Employed - BC	1,889	1.9
Unemployed - BC	174	-10.9
		May '98
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.4	9.5
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.1	8.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	June 23/99	June 23/98
Prime Business Rate	6.25	6.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.75	6.55
- 5 year	7.45	6.95
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	June 23/99	June 23/98
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4733	1.4697
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.6792	0.6803
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Apr '99	one year ago
BC	623.64	1.4
Canada	608.15	0.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm

As the nation celebrated its 132nd birthday, the Canadian money markets were closed on Wednesday, June 30.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Migration Highlights, First Quarter 1999

Next week

- No subscription releases

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